Ann Arbor Observer

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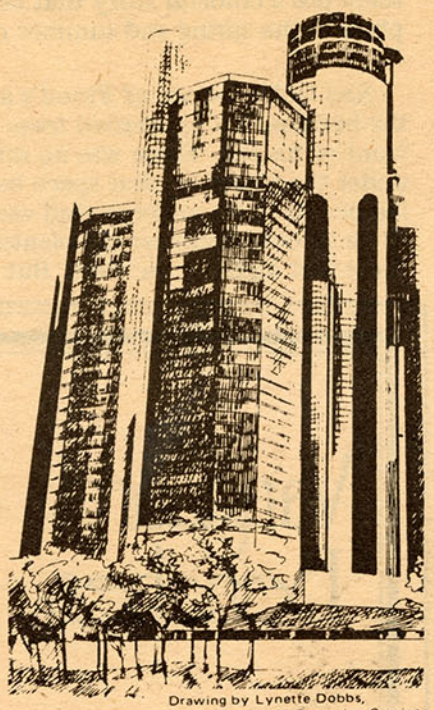
Guerrilla Improvements

Public improvements aren't always through official channels. Grass roots "guerrilla projects" can work too.



Drawing by Lynette Dobbs,
Courtesy of U-M Extension Service

Conditions in Ann Arbor have never been right for grand gesture civic improvements like the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument in Indianapolis (left) or perhaps a modest version of Detroit's Renaissance Center (middle) . . .

. . . but small-scale "guerrilla improvements" like the South University Neighborhood Park (right) have been successful. Mike and Leslie Morris led a neighborhood effort there starting seven years ago to raze dangerous vacant dwellings and maintain the property. Today it's a city park.

IN some cities civic improvement projects happen on a grand and showy scale. City officials, the chamber of commerce, and leading citizens all get together and sell themselves on a massive project to show that "our city is on the move" or "our city is a place of culture and urbanity." Fountains are the perennial favorite for this type of image-building civic improvement. During the "City Beautiful" movement around 1910 and 1920, monumental public buildings, civic plazas, and boulevards, all in the grand classical style, were popular—for example, Detroit's Cultural Center, where the Detroit Institute of Arts and Public Library face each other in gleaming white marble splendor.

In recent years downtown malls have been in vogue. Ypsilanti's new Washington Street promenade represents a typical mall design, somewhat modified to accommodate limited auto traffic: it has trees and planters, new decorative paving, spiffy street furniture—benches, kiosks, street light fixtures, waste containers, all coordinated perfectly with each other. Detroit's Renaissance Center represents the mall idea carried to a huge new extreme, where the project actually functions to create a new downtown rather than humanizing the old one.

Ann Arbor, however, is almost totally devoid of grand civic physical improvement projects. We don't have a single gleaming marble municipal palace; the old post office, a federally built structure, is our closest imitation. Our cemeteries and parks boast no imposing stone or bronze soldiers on horseback. Our fanciest old office building (now Ann Arbor Trust) was erected by a man from the village of Chelsea. Ann Arbor can't even claim credit for its impressive stone railroad station; the Michigan Central put it up. Main street's pleasant Elizabeth Dean Promenade resulted from a private citizen's bequest, not a concerted civic campaign.

Clearly the grand civic gesture has not been favored in Ann Arbor. In the old days perhaps the city's solid German conservatism and meager industrial base accounted for this lack of public pomp. (Big industrialists, accustomed to think in terms of physical production, tended to be fond of architectural extravagance and promoted it for civic projects.) Ann Arbor's civic leaders may have felt that the University campus had enough splendid buildings and institutional prestige to do for the entire town.

In recent years political developments have held back any urge Ann Arbor's civic leaders may have felt to make a grand statement by constructing an impressive physical improvement project. For a city to build on a grand scale usually requires an atmosphere of unanimity. cooperation, and shared goals that rarely occurs these days among our elected officials. Ann Arbor today is so divided politically that no one party is firmly in control. Furthermore, many activist organizations (the Chamber of Commerce, the Ecology Center, Ann Arbor Tomorrow, and Citizen's Association for Area Planning, to name only a few) and neighborhood groups have their own special interests, territories, and point of view. So even when a general goal is held in common, chances are likely that one group won't trust another's choice of who runs the project or how it should be done.

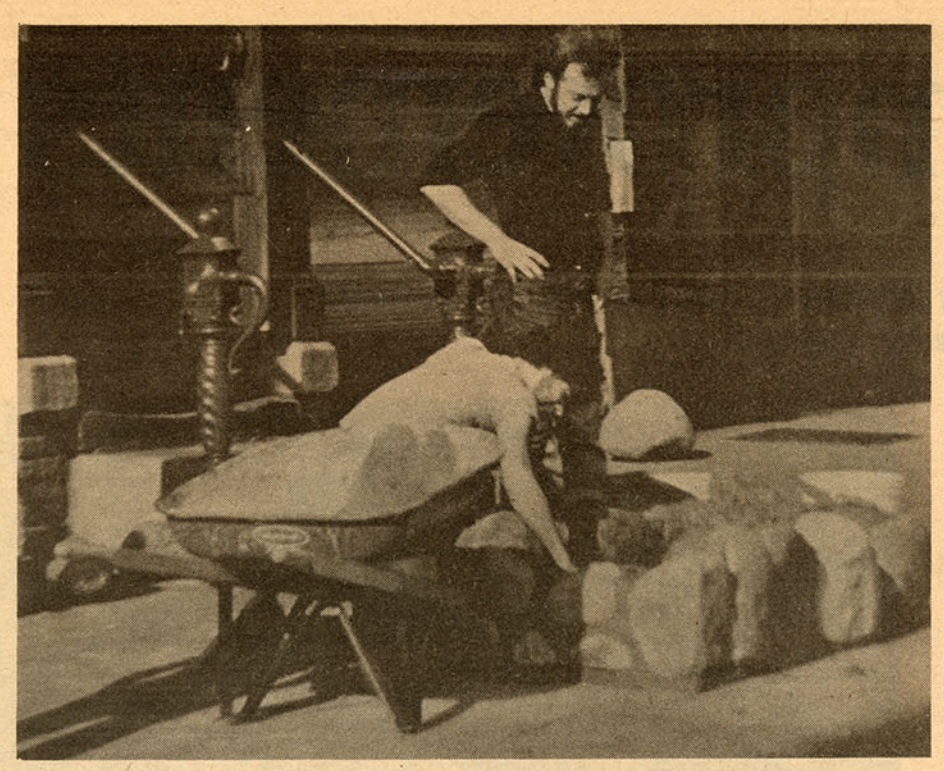
ALL civic physical improvements are not the products of big-budgeted, professionally-planned efforts, however. Sometimes one or two people, perhaps a small group, get the ball rolling on a smaller, more spontaneous project to start what Ann Arbor City Planner Marc Rueter terms "geurrilla improvements." A guerrilla improvement gets started when an interested party gets behind a project of limited scope which appears to fit into an overall goal having more widespread support. Without paid professional consultants, without a coordinated and detailled city plan, the project accomplishes something small but concrete. In the process, resistance to change is overcome and more people become involved, at which point a snowball effect may set in.

Conventionally-planned civic improvement projects are conceived as part of a coordinated plan though out well in advance: they take a long time to go through all the proper channels. Guerrilla improvements, on the other hand, are antiplanning. They occur by chance, serendipitously. They relate to adopted plans loosely, at best; at their worst, they conflict with long-range goals and mess things up.

The guerrilla project starts out modestly and spreads gradually in scope. Unlike backers of conventional building projects, who kick off their promotional efforts with elaborately rendered conceptual drawings of what *could* be constructed and later scale them down to fit economic realities, the promoters of guerrilla improvements may not know the full scope of their aims or reveal them until well after the first stages of the project have been accomplished.

Guerrilla Improvement No. 1: The South University Neighborhood Park

THE South University Neighborhood Park is a half-acre landscaped lot in the densely-built campus neighborhood at South U. and Walnut. In 1970 two abandoned houses occupied the site. These houses were ostensibly vacant, but were actually inhabited by drifters and street people. Neighbors, led by Mike and Leslie Morris, who lived next door on Walnut, went to the person who owned the abandoned houses and worked out an agreement that if the property owner would demolish the houses promptly, they would maintain the property—shovel snow in winter, mow the grass in summer. During neighborhood work days over the next five years, the Morrises and other neighborhood recruits gradually transformed the two vacant lots into a popular, well-maintained park. Swings, a sandbox and other play equipment was installed. Trees, bulbs, and grass were planted. A tasteful fence was built to surround the park. After many hours of work, the home-made park became a popular stopping place for adults and a well-frequented play-



Mr. Flood's planter, second edition, under construction. The first planter, built without a permit, was demolished by the city.

ground for children.

But the lots were still privately owned and might have been sold to a developer. When the Morrises first went to the parks department with the idea that the city should acquire the property, they were told that small scattered city parks in dense central area neighborhoods would likely become maintenance and security problems. But the South University Neighborhood Park, privately maintained by volunteers, demonstrated that small parks could work in the central city. In 1975 city council voted to acquire the property. Through her involvement with the park, Leslie Morris became a member of the Mayor's Committee on Parks and Open Space. Last April she was elected to city council, so she now helps decide parks policy.

Guerrilla Improvement No. 2: Planters in front of Mr. Flood's Party

ON West Liberty between Main and Ashley are two distinctive fieldstone planter boxes, each containing a tree and some ground cover. These planters represent the extra-legal variety of guerrilla improvements; behind them lies a colorful story that took place in the spring and summer of 1975.

Ned Duke, owner of Flood's and the building it's in, wanted trees in front of his bar. There was no dirt under the sidewalk, that space being occupied by underground vaults, so he erected a substantial planter three feet high for the trees. But he failed to apply for a permit to use the public right-of-way, in this case the sidewalk. No sooner had

Ann Arbor Observer

Don Hunt and Mary Hunt, Editors

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☎ (313) 769-3175

The Ann Arbor Observer is published at the beginning of each month and is available free of charge.

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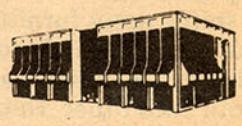

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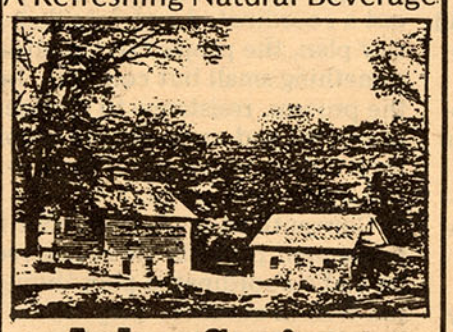

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one $300 planter been completed than the city removed it, having warned Duke that it was not only illegal but also a public nuisance threatening the public safety. Duke claimed he never received the warning personally.

The incident made interesting reading in the next day's *Ann Arbor News*. The city work crew "came down with a great big front loader and just literally scooped the whole thing away," Duke was quoted as saying. "They had even swept up. There wasn't a spot left. It was like a nightmare."

"If planters are an imminent threat to the public health and safety, then we're planning to take over the city with flowers," proclaimed Duke's attorney Dennis Hughes.

Duke admitted he should have applied for a permit to build the planter. When he did so after the front end loader incident, permission was denied on the grounds that the planter reduced the sidewalk right-of-way to 5 feet 6 inches, when 6 feet is required. But Duke's guerrilla action and the ensuing city reaction of destroying the planter had aroused so much public sympathy that when Duke took his case for a special variance before city council, approval was unanimous, and the planters were built as Duke had originally intended.

Guerrilla Improvement No. 3: Fourth Avenue and Sculpture Park Brick Paving

NOT far from the Farmers' Market at the intersection of North Fourth Ave. and Catherine is a triangular open space formed by the diagonal extension of Detroit Street into the intersection. City council has approved closing off the Detroit Street extension to form a small plaza for an 18-foot-high Cor-Ten steel sculpture, winner of Ann Arbor Tomorrow's 1975 Downtown Arts Competition. One person's discovery of a buried legacy from Ann Arbor's past was the stimulus for a guerrilla improvement which will considerably enhance the sculpture's site.

When Bill De Brooke saw how easily workmen could remove the three inch asphalt layer and uncover the old paving bricks on Fourth Avenue, he volunteered to remove the asphalt from the Urban Sculpture Park site and re-use the bricks to pave the park, rather than harsher-looking concrete.

"Any normal person would wonder if they could realistically pile this mountain of asphalt chunks into a truck by themselves," De Brooke mused aloud as he attacked the pile. "I wonder what's the matter with me?" Sometimes that kind of attitude is necessary to initiate guerrilla improvement projects.

After months of disputes the sculpture park decisions were all sewed up in mid-September. Plans were approved and contracts let. No one wanted the park to be paved with concrete slabs, but city council reluctantly settled on concrete rather than brick because hand-laid brick seemed prohibitively expensive.

For the past two weeks, however, a small wiry man with a slight Texas twang, generally dressed in old work clothes, has been rushing around contacting city officials, contractors, and property owners, putting together a complicated series of deals and promises that will get the sculpture park paved in brick at a cost to the city of only $2500—despite the $8000 price tag originally attached to brick paving.

That man is Bill De Brooke, a 34-year-old former sociologist and insurance salesman who has recently bought five run-down houses on Detroit Street. De Brooke spends his days renovating the often decrepit houses he has acquired, doing nearly all the work himself, with help from his son and friend Sue Armbruster.

Last month De Brooke expanded his holdings into the downtown commercial district by purchasing, along with a partner, the Downtown Club, formerly the YMCA, at 110 N. Fourth Ave. In the basement (once the Y's swimming pool) he has found new quarters for part of Antiques Village (formerly next to the Farmers' Market) to add some life and interest to the block. He plans to upgrade the Downtown Club while keeping it as a moderate-price rooming house.

De Brooke's guerrilla-style intervention in the sculpture park construction started in early September, when he found out about the city's sidewalk replacement project scheduled for North Fourth Avenue in front of his newly-acquired building. He happened to see city planner Marc Reuter's drawings for North Fourth Avenue trees and sidewalk improvements. For a little extra money, he realized, the street could have something much more attractive than plain concrete — a 30 inch strip of brick between the sidewalk and the curb. But he would have to arrange the improvement himself; City Hall's efforts had bogged down.

(continued on page 14)

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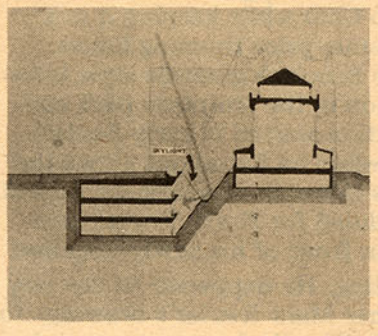
ANN ARBOR ITEMS

A Novel Solution to a Difficult Architectural Problem



This cross-sectional view indicates the views of the Gothic Revival law library seen from all three levels of the underground addition. The large gray arrow shows how light will bounce off the reflecting limestone "moat" wall into the skylight to bring natural light into the building.

The Law Quadrangle was erected in the 1920's when skilled stonemasons and other construction craftsmen were available and affordable to do the intricate work on the carved stone Gothic Revival decorations. Such craftsmanship is prohibitively expensive these days and when The University of Michigan Law School decided to embark on a capital campaign for the construction of a law library addition, it faced the problem of blending a simple modern structure with the ornate English Gothic style of the existing buildings.

The Law School opted for an underground library addition. But architect Gunnar Birkerts still faced the problem of integrating an underground facility with the tradition-laden atmosphere of the Law Quad. The widely-acclaimed Birmingham, Michigan, architect believes he has achieved a solution by designing "an underground structure with many of the virtues of an above-ground building with regard to light and exterior view."

The unusual new addition will contain a 150-foot-long skylight facing the existing Law Library, giving users of the new structure an unobstructed view of Gothic tracery, finials, and spires.

"For the past several years I have been interested in finding new ways to project daylight deeper into buildings, including underground buildings," said the 52-year-old, Latvian-born Birkerts. "Much of my experimentation has dealt with the use of optics to increase available natural light."

Birkerts designed the widely-acclaimed Federal Reserve Bank in Minneapolis (about half of which is underground), the south addition to the Detroit Institute of Arts, Ford Motor Company's Visitor Reception Center in Dearborn and other award-winning buildings around the country. In addition to his architecture practice, he teaches architecture at U-M.

In taking on the U-M Law School project, Birkerts says he felt keenly challenged by the prospect of creating an addition to an existing complex of "high-level traditional architecture." Among the initial exploratory designs for the library addition, besides the underground concepts, were Birkerts' proposals for

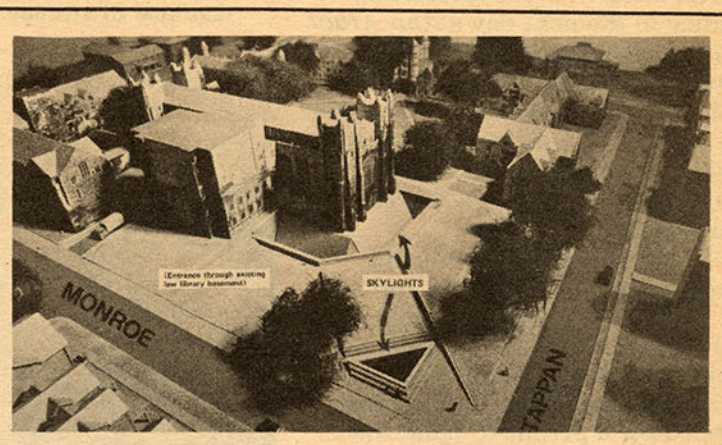


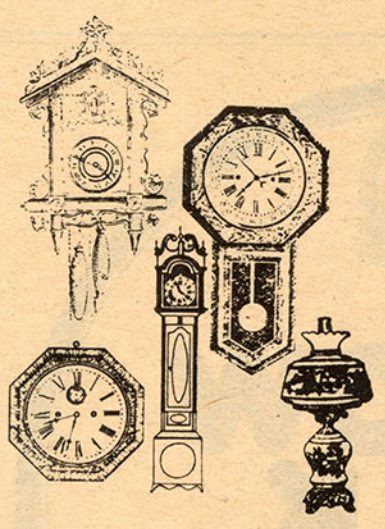
Photo by Bob Kalmbach, U-M Information Services

a loft-type structure opening onto the Law Quad, with a receding roof which would not alter the silhouette of the Quadrangle. "These initial designs were of an architecturally unobtrusive building that would attempt to blend into the Quadrangle," said Birkerts.

Eventually the Law School's Alumni Development Committee, in conjunction with the Faculty Building Committee, settled on the underground concept—the same solution chosen by Harvard and Yale universities, where lack of space prohibited above-ground library additions.

Groundbreaking for the $8 million structure is expected to take place in late fall, and the addition is due for completion by the spring of 1980. Of its 62,500 square feet, some 40,000 will be usable space, including 20,000 square feet for book storage, 10,000 square feet for library staff space, including circulation, reference, and microfilming facilities, and another 10,000 square feet for carrels, study areas, and offices for the Mich Law Review and the Journal of Law Reform.

–Harvey Schwardron



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Blackbird Flocks Are Forming Now

An October item on the local bird scene from ornithologist Steve Cohen:

The large flocks of birds foraging in the fields and lawns around Ann Arbor are composed of either starlings or grackles, red-wing blackbirds, and cowbirds. All roost together at night. A roost can be found by following the flight-line of individuals and small groups an hour or two before sunset.

Starling and blackbird flocks begin forming in the summer, then coalesce during the fall migration. Those flocks which have already gone South eventually wind up along the Gulf Coast. The flocks which we see now in Michigan will only go as far south as Tennessee, Kentucky and Maryland. There some winter roosts will contain as many as four million birds on a given night.

The early migrants do considerable damage to the corn and rice crops still in the fields as they pass through. The blackbirds which arrive later and stay through the winter subsist on the waste grain left in fields after the harvest. Starlings, on the other hand, eat grain in cattle feedlots and spoil even more of it with their droppings. All the birds in a large roost, starlings and blackbirds alike, are the object of extermination efforts demanded by farmers and feedlot operators and carried out by state agencies.

Ironically these problems did not occur until suburban development destroyed many of the marshlands where the flocks prefer to roost.

Starlings were introduced to this continent by sentimental Englishmen who felt the New World should know all the birds mentioned in Shakespeare. Unfortunately, it's a destructive bird that eats and spoils grain fed to cattle.

Ozone House Has a New Location

Ozone House has moved. After changing locations five times in its seven year existence, the youth counseling center has now purchased a home jointly with Drug Help. Street bucket collections, the sale of helium balloons at the Farmers' Market and the art fairs, church group and individual contributions provided the money for a downpayment on the property at 608 N. Main.

Both organizations, which help young people with various problems, are happy to be located in a semi-residential neighborhood. Next door to them is a recently developed 2 lot city park. The staff believes this will be a congenial environment for the people they help.

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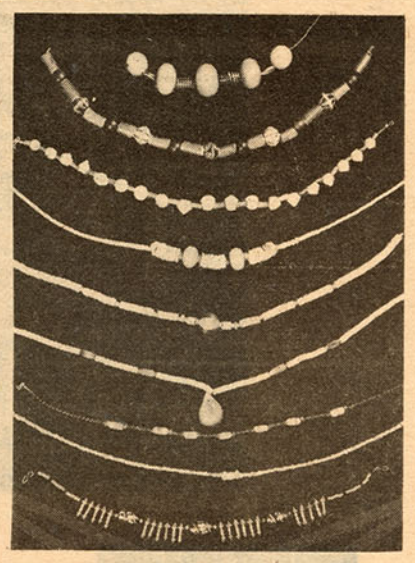

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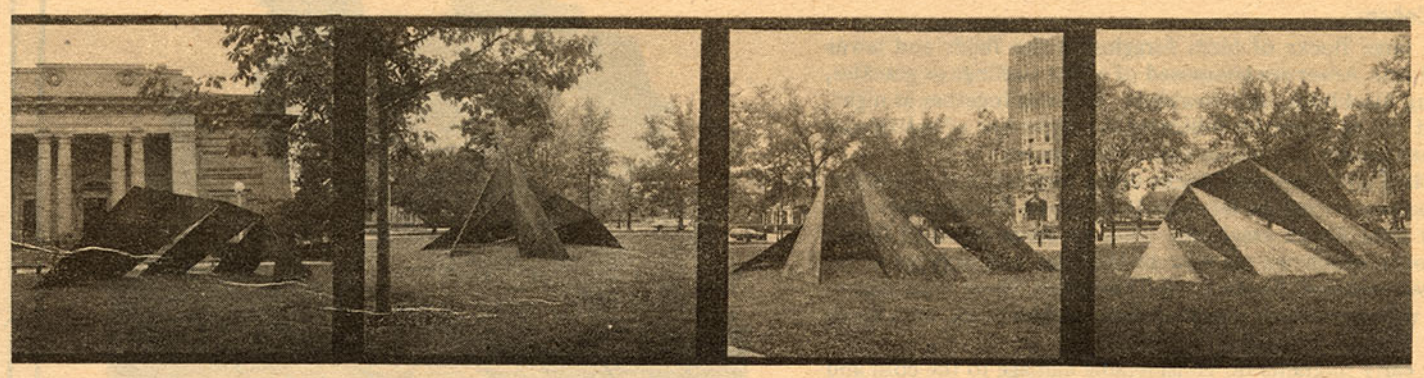
A Dynamic New Sculpture on Campus



Its appearance changes radically as you walk around it.

First there was "The Cube" (the revolving black block by Bernard Rosenthal on Regents' Plaza,) followed by "The Tooth Fairy" (William Barrett's Dental School sculpture). Now, in front of the U-M Museum of Art (across from the Michigan Union), a third piece of contemporary sculpture can be seen on the central campus. It's by Charles Ginnever, a 46-year-old American sculptor, and officially he calls it "Daedalus." It doesn't have an unofficial nickname yet. Created in 1975, it's the first of the series of Greek-named pieces by this increasingly important American sculptor. (In Greek mythology Daedalus was the inventive craftsman who fashioned wings for himself and his son Icarus to escape from the labyrinth he had designed for the King of Crete.)

The 10-by-30 foot construction of Cor-Ten steel had a $50,000 price-tag. A subscription drive by the Friends of the Museum of Art raised most of the funds for the purchase of a work to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the museum's establishment as an independent unit under the directorship of Jean Paul Slusser. The National Endowment for the Arts contributed a $20,000 matching grant. The executive committee of the Museum of Art, led by Museum Director Bret Waller, selected "Daedalus."

We asked Jean Paul Slusser how he likes the museum's birthday present now that it's been installed. Quite well, he said, though he warned it may take awhile for some people to get used to it. The sculpture, Slusser told us, "implies a great deal of movement without actually moving. It tempts one to walk around it. Each view is different. Seen from the front, the parallel planes bow strongly to the right and throw you off balance. Then, as you walk around it, it gradually recovers its equilibrium." The open spaces between different parts of the sculpture (the so-called "negative spaces") are just as important to the sculpture's effect as the physical structure itself, Slusser explained.

The site, on the front lawn of the art museum at one of the busiest spots on campus was chosen because pedestrian traffic surrounds it, and the sculpture can be viewed from every angle. Daedalus's dynamic dark and contemporary form is an enlivening contrast to the white classical symmetry of Alumni Memorial Hall behind it. The sculpture has a similar tonic effect when viewed against the Law Quad, the Union, and Angell Hall. At present the surface is mottled, with gray patches from the milling process. Eventually it will turn a uniform matte reddish-brown.

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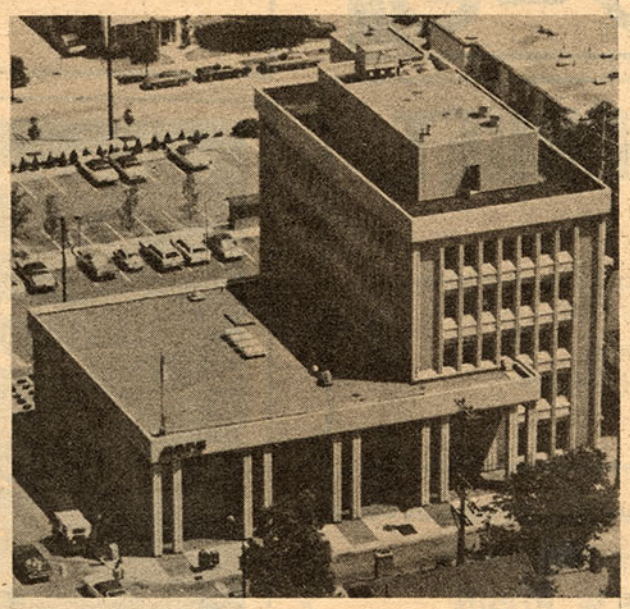

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Start Paying Your Parking Tickets

For years motorists in Ann Arbor have been able to accumulate unpaid parking fines with little worry of being caught. Now the city is starting to crack down on delinquent fine payers, and the effect could ease the parking crunch in central Ann Arbor.

IT'S not an uncommon sight in central Ann Arbor: the dash or seat of a car littered with unpaid parking tickets. Nor is it uncommon to see persons taking parking tickets from under their car's windshield wiper and throw them away. Such scenes mean a parking enforcement system has lost its credibility, and this has been the case with Ann Arbor's system for some time now.

An average of over 25,000 park-tickets are issued monthly in Ann Arbor, and about one fourth of these tickets will never be paid. The main reason is that up until now, the chance of being caught not paying parking tickets has been slight. Consequently, the city loses hundreds of thousands of dollars in unpaid parking fines. But the real problem is not this lost fine revenue, it is the weakened enforcement function that parking fines provide for the city's parking system. When the public gradually comes to realize that the city can't back up its ticketing policy, fewer people will bother to pay parking meters. It's this parking meter revenue that is a crucial part of keeping a self-supporting parking system going. In a parking system like Ann Arbor's which is barely self-supporting and lacks funds to provide badly needed additional parking spaces, the system needs all the parking meter revenues it can get.

There is no question that, human nature being what it is, there has to be strict parking enforcement in order to motivate people to pay their way when they park. For example, back in 1970, when meter rates were doubled, the revenues from meters eventually dwindled to virtually the same amount received before the rate increase, even though the metered parking spaces were as heavily used as ever. Motorists simply weren't feeding the meters. Yet the city, fearful of appearing too punitive, waited years before strengthening its parking enforcement program.

PROVIDING parking in central Ann Arbor is probably the most thankless service the city provides. Parking meters and parking structures, although they have been around since 1947, are still an irritant to most motorists who can drive out to shopping centers and park all day free. Not only must many downtown parkers use tomb-like parking structures and pay parking fees and fines they often face the necessity of walking several blocks to their destination. Street-side parking close to where one is going in the central area is a delightful exception.

Ironically, the bad parking situation in central Ann Arbor is a reflection of this area's health. It is becoming, after a slump in the 1960's, an increasingly vital and appreciated part of Ann Arbor for Ann Arborites and outsiders alike. On a typical week-day, tens of thousands of cars and trucks come into the downtown/campus area. What most people seem not yet to understand is that in this kind of densely developed area where space is limited and precious, there is no easy, inexpensive way to provide convenient parking. Thus when parking meter rates go up, the typical motorist, ignorant of the economics of providing urban parking, is more likely to see the rate increase as a product of greedy, inefficient city government, rather than a reflection of the increasingly expensive luxury of central city parking.

The ultimate solution to urban travel is probably a widely used mass transportation system, and one can hopefully look forward to a time when most central area trips will be provided by AATA. Increased use of bicycles would also be a great help. Unfortunately, as auto-industry people are fond of saying, Americans are still wedded to the automobile. Cars are overwhelmingly the popular choice of those who go to central Ann Arbor.

Given the cost and scarcity of downtown land, the primary way cities have to provide parking for motorists who can't find street-side spaces is to stack them one above the other in parking structures. But parking structures are very expensive to build ($2.5-$3.5 million each), and costly to maintain and operate. Ann Arbor now needs two additional parking structures in the downtown/campus area to ease the parking crunch,

but there isn't available money to build them. Property taxes being as high as they are in Ann Arbor, city council members find it politically impossible to raise taxes to build something which serves the needs of one segment of citizens more than another. And downtown property owners, the greatest benefactors of better parking facilities, apparently don't agree strongly enough that they ought to shoulder the main burden of paying for parking improvements. Thus special assessments of their properties is not likely to be the primary means of financing such improvements.

If the parking system had more money, it could also afford to strategically reduce the rates for long-term carport parking so as to open up more streetside spaces for short-term parkers. The cost of parking in parking structures is now about the same as that of curb-side metered parking. Ideally, the hourly rates in the structures should be low enough to attract long-term parkers, especially those who work downtown and near the campus. A major reason parking is scarce along streets during the day is that these spaces have already been taken by people who come early in the morning to work. A study of parking around State Street and North University, for example, showed that 70% of the street parking spaces were occupied by nearby employees who preferred to feed the short-term meters rather than park a block away in Maynard Carport and pay the same rate.

The most obvious way of gaining more money for the parking system is to raise parking rates. This would seem to be the most equitable way of generating additional revenues. But there is widespread fear that if the cost of parking keeps going up, it will so discourage shoppers from going downtown that the measure would backfire and net revenues from meters would not increase even though the rates were higher.

By a process of elimination, the key source of money to improve downtown/campus parking will probably have to be the money the parking system itself generates through parking fees at meters and attended structures. (Parking *fines* go to the city's general fund, not the parking fund.) But the city's five parking structures operate at a loss (see table of operating expenses versus revenues). The money-makers are the parking meters, which earn about $450,000 over costs a year. But even with this hefty bulge, the system as a whole now only barely breaks even.

Thus, if the parking system is to expand to meet current demands for parking, the major burden is on parking meter revenues. For this reason, although popular sentiment is against it, the city has been forced to strengthen its enforcement of metered parking. But even now, only about 20% of parking violations are ticketed.

THE big improvement in parking enforcement began two years ago. Up until 1975, the Police Department had responsibility for parking enforcement. Understandably, the police had never given high priority to parking violations, given the many more urgent demands for their assistance. Back in the 1960's, the department hired special "limited duty parking enforcement personnel" (then called "meter maids") whose main duty was to ticket illegally parked cars. But these parking enforcers were also used for various other routine police functions, and they weren't as effective as they might have been in patrolling city streets.

In 1975, these parking enforcers, who now number twelve, were transferred to the Department of Streets, Traffic, and Parking. Under their new head, Cy Hughes, they have been assigned to one of six central Ann Arbor zones. Each of these zones contains about 800 meters, and parking enforcers are now instructed to focus entirely on his or her zone.

While this change increased the efficiency of meter patrols, it didn't appreciably affect the percentage of parking tickets that were paid. Clearly, if people think they don't need to pay parking tickets, even the most rigorous parking meter enforcement won't motivate motorists to put money in the meters. As the parking enforcers made their rounds in recent years, it became obvious to them that a large number of motorists weren't taking parking meters seriously. They would continue to pile up one ticket after another. Part of the reason is that the parking fine of $2 is lower than what one would likely have to pay if one parks all day at a meter. The obvious step is to raise the fine for an expired meter to make it more costly to avoid paying the meters. However, an increase in the fine for an expired meter would be so unpopular with an already disgruntled public that this needed increase is not likely to be passed

PARKING SYSTEM FUND 1977–78 BUDGET

REVENUES		EXPENDITURES	
Parking Meters	*440,000*	*Parking Meters*	*94,000*
Parking Structures	*852,700*	*Parking Structures*	*913,320*
Parking Lots	*274,300*	*Parking Lots*	*179,640*
General Fund Debt Service	*83,880*	*Administration*	*457,570*
Miscellaneous	*15,000*		
	$1,665,880		*$1,644,530*

Ann Arbor's public parking system: only barely in balance. More revenues are needed if the system is to increase the supply of downtown/campus parking.

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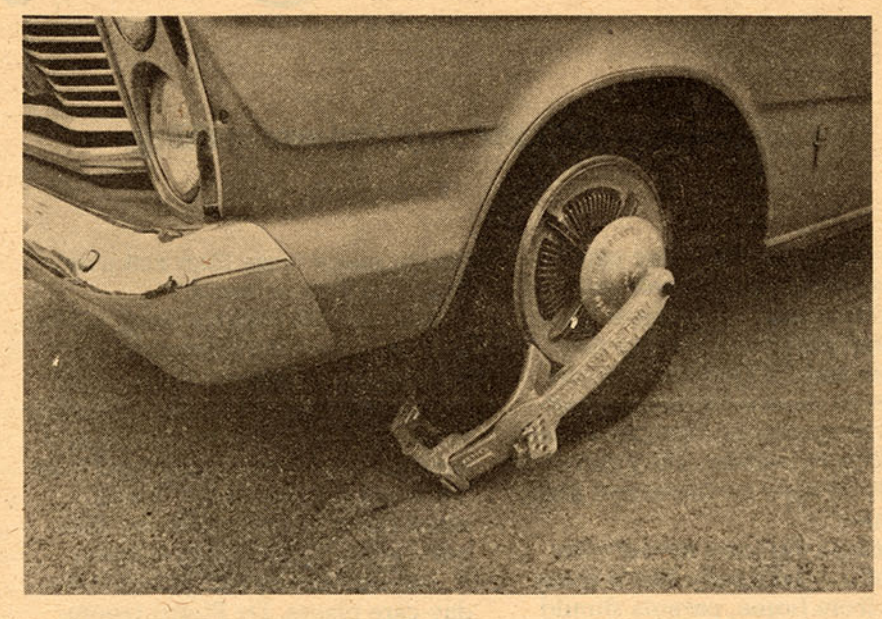
At least the motorists who gamble on getting only one $2 ticket for parking all day at an expired meter may go ahead and pay that ticket. But many motorists don't even bother to do this. They sometimes amass dozens of tickets, and up until now the city has had no efficient way to handle them. The chief way the city has of calling these delinquent parking fine payers to task has been towing their cars when they have been identified. Some time back city council passed an ordinance which allows cars with ten or more outstanding parking tickets to be towed and held until those fines are paid.

Not until last June were parking enforcers given authority to have such cars towed. Before then it required the authorization of a police officer. Often that meant a parking enforcer had to stand around waiting over half an hour until an officer arrived.

Even with this added authority, parking enforcers find that towing is an inefficient means of getting parking fine delinquents to pay up. Towing means waiting for a tow truck, and if there are any items of consequence in the car, this property becomes the city's responsibility until the car is returned to its owner. that property must therefore be signed into the property section of the police department, another time-consuming procedure.



The Denver Boot: applied in less than five minutes, it immobilizes the vehicle. The boot is the first efficient means cities have of getting delinquent parking fine payers to pay up.

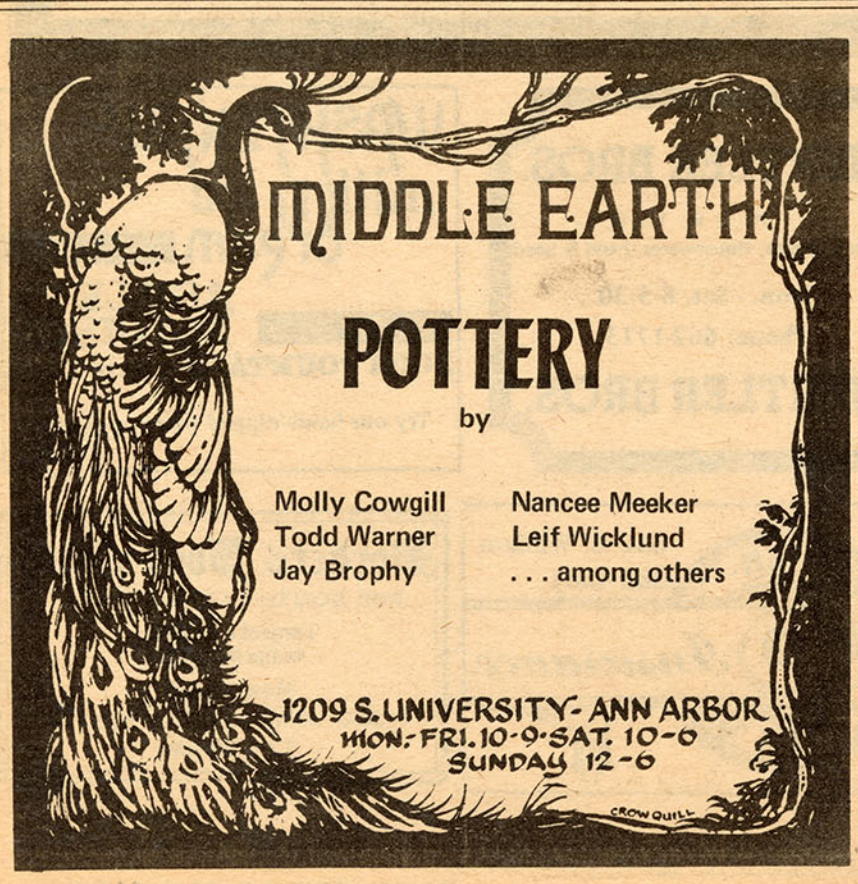
THESE factors, no doubt, led to the invention of the "Denver boot" as an alternative to towing. This device clamps around the wheel of a car. Until unlocked with special keys, it immobilizes the vehicle. A notice is put on the car's windshield telling the motorist that the boot will be removed once his or her fines are paid. In less than five minutes, a parking enforcer using the Denver boot can handle what it once took well over half an hour to do by towing. And the procedure saves the offending motorist the added $20 fee for towing.

In cities which have tried this method (Denver, Paris, Washington, D.C., New York, among others) the results have been dramatic. Washington police report that in the first two months of using the Denver boot, they collected $80,000 in fines using only five boots. They have now acquired twenty boots and expect to nab 20,000 delinquent fine-payers in 1977.

The effect of using the boot is much more than just getting offenders to pay their parking fines. When word gets around about the boot, the credibility of parking enforcement will increase. Not only will more motorists voluntarily pay their parking fines, more will be motivated to avoid getting tickets in the first place by paying the parking meters. Ann Arbor now has three Denver boots (at $150 each), and the booting program is just getting under way. If this new method works well, more boots will be ordered.

If, as expected, the city's more efficient parking enforcement procedures increase the amount of meter revenues, this increase will still not produce enough added money to pay for the needed new parking structures. For this reason, some people, including council member Lou Belcher, suggest that some percentage of parking fines, which now all go into the city's general fund, be put back into the parking system. Ann Arbor now makes about $300,000 (after costs) in parking fines, and that sum could increase considerably if the booting program is put into full effect. As the amount of money the city makes from parking fines mount, this punitively based source of revenue may become more and more of an embarrassment to the city, which is already perceived by many as establishing a vigorous ticketing policy merely to pile more money into its coffers. Were some of this parking fine money used to improve parking facilities, public resentment might be lessened.

One cannot, however, even predict that the city's increasingly stringent parking enforcement policies will continue indefinitely. If a public backlash were severe enough, council pressure on the city administration may cause it to let up on offending parkers. Parking enforcement is clearly not popular with the public, which explains why the city has taken so long to develop a truly effective enforcement system. But tough enforcement appears the only way, short of increased taxes, to pay the expensive cost of downtown/campus parking. ●



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Help in Choosing Day Care

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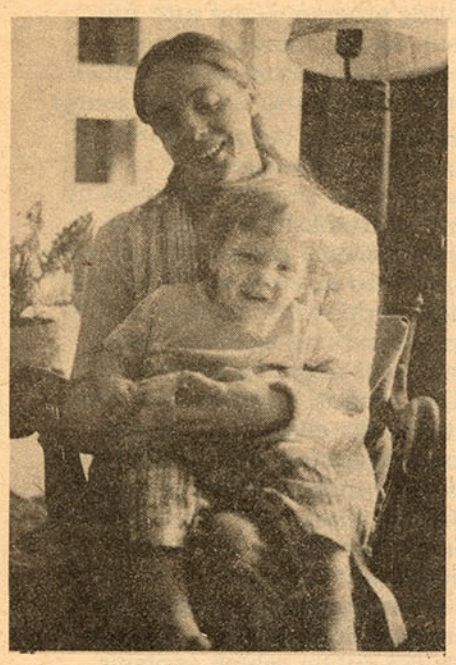

Reporter Sue Carr knows First-hand about the problems of finding day care. She started journalism school full time just two months after the birth of her son Adam, now two.

Choosing the right day care arrangements in Ann Arbor can be a frustrating task for parents. There are nearly 20 full-time day-care centers and 150 private day-care homes to choose from, plus part-time co-operatives, nursery schools, and drop-in centers. They can differ greatly in their practices and philosophies.

Because day care means a big part of a child's early life is spent away from home, parents should choose it carefully.

That's why Leslie De Pietro started the free, non-profit Child Care Referral Service a year ago. She had found that convenient location was too often the main criterion in selecting day care. "My goal is to educate parents in the intricacies of day care and to teach them how to shop for it with confidence," she says. "Ann Arbor has such a broad range of centers and nurseries to choose from, that a parent needs more than just a list from the Yellow Pages."

Much of De Pietro's work is done over the phone (the number is 662-1127). A referral can take up to half an hour. "The first two questions I ask the parents are 'Do you need all-day or part-time care?' and 'How old is your child?' From there I'm able to narrow the field quite a bit." (See listing below.)

Parents should visit prospective day-care places, De Pietro recommends. First-hand observation takes time and patience for busy parents, she admits, but it's worthwhile in the long run. The Child Care Referral Service has a checklist of questions to ask and things to look for when visiting day-care establishments. "It's easy for parents to see all the fun toys and brightly-colored walls and immediately think they've found the best place," she cautions. "But toys don't always mean good day care." Parents should look in to methods of discipline, transportation arrangements, the daily program, and licensing before they finally decide. Complaint records and inspection reports on specific centers are available from the State Department of Social Services under the recently-passed Freedom of Information Act.

De Pietro warns that state law doesn't cover the length of time a child can be on a bus. "One center begins picking up children at 6 a.m., but the center itself doesn't open until 8 a.m. This is much too long for a child to be on a bus." Furthermore, she says, just because a center is licensed, it's not necessarily high quality. The state allows a center ample warning before inspecting them. If parent complaints are frequent, however, surprise inspections may be made.

Day-care programs should be questioned closely because child-rearing philosophies and techniques vary so greatly. Inconsistency between home and day care could be hard on a child.

The formal type of program is typcially found in nursery schools. A session may be divided into "play time," story time," juice time," "quiet time," and so forth. "The most noted example of this structure is in one of the Montessori schools, where the children have very rigid schedules," according to De Pietro. The day-care centers are less formal, sometimes bordering on wide open. Many have a structured morning program with afternoons for naps and free time.

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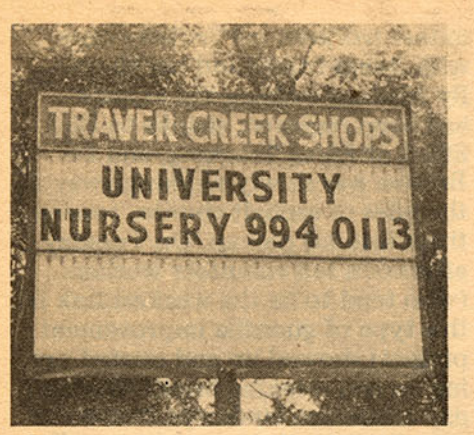

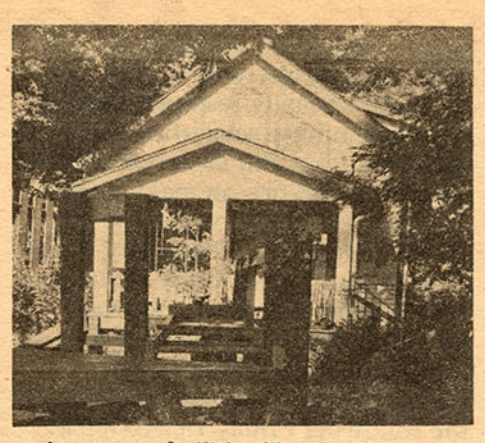

Day-care alternatives range from large shopping center facilities like the University Nursery to small operations like the Children's Community Center on North Seventh. Child-rearing philosophies differ significantly, too.

Places to Call When Shopping for Day Care

The Child Care Referral Service 662-1127.
A telephone referral service with free information and counseling on day-care centers, co-operatives, nursery schools, and drop-in centers. Listings cover available openings, hours, rates, transportation, and child care approach. There's a free pamphlet, "How to Choose a Child Care Setting."

The Family Day Care Council of Michigan, 484-0978.
Another telephone referral service with lists of family day-care homes. It offers support services for family day-care operators, too.

Huron Valley Council of Cooperative Nurseries, 426-2310.
Lists and details on co-ops are available. Parents and nursery staffs can attend monthly meetings.

For Handicapped Children including mentally, emotionally & physically impaired; learning disabled; and hearing, visually, & language impaired.
Part-time programs are available through Ann Arbor Public Schools. Call Janice Frieder at 994-2325.

For Children in Low-Income Families:
Regardless of ADC status, children from low-income families are eligible for day-care scholarships through the Community Development Block Grant office at City Hall. Call Elizabeth Rahn at 994-2915.

Children in the Mack, Mitchell, Northside, and Bryant school districts can join an early childhood program, and children of families on public assistance can be part of the Head Start program. Call Dr. Carolyn Morado at the Ann Arbor Public Schools (994-2306) in either case.

Types of Day Care Available

Day-Care Center Full-time over 2½ yrs.
Full or part-time care for over six children ages 2½ to 5-years-old in other than a private residence. Ann Arbor has 17 full-time centers open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., although a few stay open until 6:00 p.m. Costs range from $35 to $45 per 40-hour week. Some centers offer transportation and hot lunches.

Infant Center: Full-time, infants to 2½ yrs.
Ann Arbor has only one infant center which accepts children from 2 weeks to 2½-years-old. Teen-age mothers attending school have priority in enrolling their children, although often there are openings for college or working parents. Fees are arranged on a sliding scale and State day-care payments are accepted. It is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and provides breakfast, lunch, formula, diapers, and a trained staff.

Nursery Schools: Part-time, over 2½ yrs.
Seven formal nursery schools offer morning or afternoon sessions two or three days a week. Children must be 2½ to 5 years old and toilet-trained. Sessions can include classes in art, science, cooking, math, reading, or foreign languages. Costs are based on 4-month semesters and average $170.000, or $10.00 per week.

Co-operative Nursery Schools: Part/Full time, over 2½ yrs.
Typical co-operatives have part-time sessions although a few have full-time programs. Unlike any of the other types of day-care, parents are responsible both for program content and teaching. Costs, then, are considerably reduced to an average $100 per 4-month semester.

Drop-in Centers: Part-time, Infants & up.
There are four drop-in centers in Ann Arbor which offer short-term child-care for infants and pre-school children. The service is free, provided by volunteers, and doesn't require advance reservations.

Family Day-Care Homes: Part/Full-time, infants and up.
Ann Arbor has close to 150 state-licensed homes where a mother takes care of 6 or less children other than her own in her home. Costs vary widely from $20 per week to $45.00 and very few accept state-day care payments. Hours vary.

—Sue Carr

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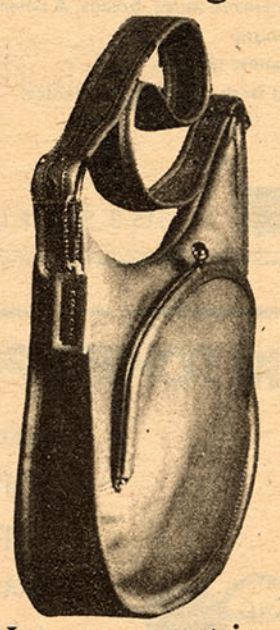
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Guerrilla Improvements

(continued from page 5)

So De Brooke started down the street, trying to sell the brick strip to property owners on Fourth Ave. between Huron and Catherine. "For a little more money we can have something *really* nice"—that was his message. For reluctant holdouts he engineered deals: "so-and-so says he'll do it if you'll do it," or, "you're the last piece of property on the block; if you go in, the whole block will be done."

Within 10 days DeBrooke had lined up every property owner except one for two blocks, all agreeing to pay $11 a running foot for a brick sidewalk strip no one had ever considered before.

With brick already on his mind, DeBrooke watched with interest as the sidewalk construction crews cut into the old brick pavement beneath Fourth Avenue to widen the sidewalk on one part of the street. The asphalt paving came off quite easily, he noticed. So one Saturday evening, after a typical day's work on his Detroit Street residential property, he came down with a crowbar to "play around" with the asphalt. "Playing around" is a characteristic DeBrooke expression—no matter how hard he works, he's "just playing around."

The asphalt really did come off easily, DeBrooke found, and underneath were all these beautiful old paving bricks. What a shame to cover them up with concrete where the Sculpture Park was going in. With a little extra effort, you could take off the asphalt, dig up the bricks, and have the park paved with brick, which everybody wanted but no one felt the city could afford.

Still, the construction drawings for a concrete plaza had been approved and the contracts were drawn up. How could a last-minute change be arranged especially when it involved extra work for the contractor? Those were DeBrooke's thoughts as he returned home from a restaurant that Saturday night. As he passed City Hall, he saw the third floor lights go on, and, remembering an *Ann Arbor Observer* article mentioning City Administrator Sy Murray's habit of working late Saturday nights, he went upstairs to chat with him and explore the idea of paving the plaza with brick. Could some extra funds for brick paving be found from some source, and could the contract specifications be altered? Murray says he doesn't usually respond positively to last-minute suggestions and demands, "but Bill DeBrooke seemed willing to work on making the arrangements and doing some of the work himself. I knew city council liked the idea of brick paving, so I went along with him." Murray agreed to check out the idea with the Community Development, Parks and Streets departments, and the following Friday DeBrooke got the go-ahead to negotiate with the contractor and start lining up a volunteer work crew. After spending a frustrating afternoon and evening trying to locate George Saladino, the contractor, DeBrooke talked with him and made this deal: if De Brooke would remove the asphalt on the short extension of Detroit Street, haul it away in trucks, take up the brick, clean it and stack it into piles ready for relaying *within one week*, Saladino's crews would lay the brick for $2,500, not $8,000, the figure that had originally been suggested. Murray said the $2500 could be found, and De Brooke spent Saturday trying to find interested volunteer workers, particularly ones with dump trucks and backhoes. By Monday evening the asphalt had been removed, thanks to Dick Elliot of Elliot Trucking, and De Brooke was slowly working away at the piles of asphalt chunks, tossing them into his pickup. On Tuesday afternoon ten volunteer workers (who tend to be the weakest link in this type of guerrilla improvement project) showed up and started prying up and cleaning bricks. Wednesday afternoon landscape contractor John Hollowell stopped by to offer the use of his front-end loader for a few hours to scoop the asphalt piles into trucks. Calvert Brothers construction has agreed to remove the concrete island at the intersection with their air hammers. And Bill De Brooke is having a fine time out there, working ten hours a day. "Everything's going right," he said. "Even the volunteers showed up. The city's been so damn cooperative it's unbelievable. Of course there's a lot of people who really care in City Hall, and that really makes a difference."

As this article goes to press, the paving of the Urban Sculpture Park in brick is well on its way to being

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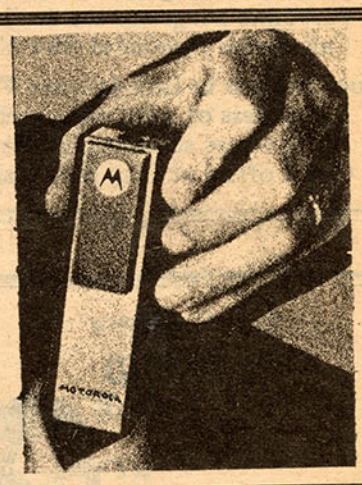

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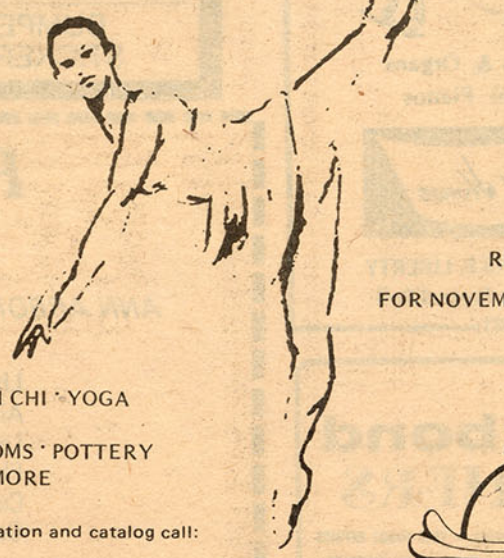

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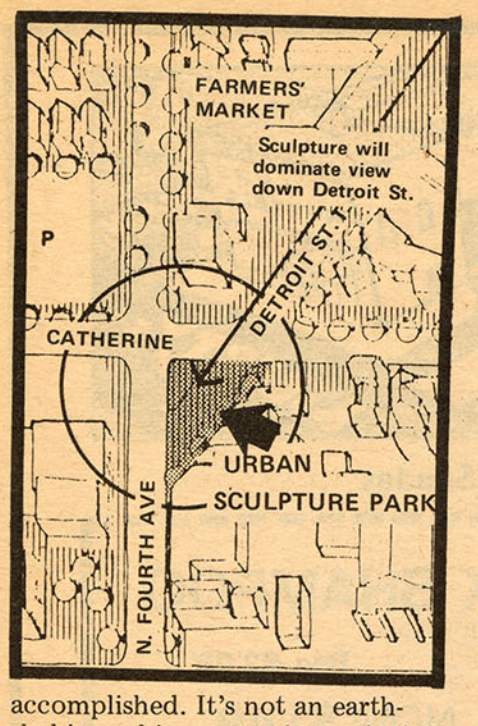

accomplished. It's not an earth-shaking achievement; it won't significantly alter anyone's life. But the mellow red paving will be much more pleasant than harsh concrete, and a lot of people on North Fourth Avenue will have had the satisfaction of helping to improve their public environment.

DON'T be surprised if in the future another idea keeps popping up: to uncover the old brick streets around the Farmers' Market. The thing about guerrilla improvements is that they succeed (when they do succeed) because of commonly-held general goals which, as the guerrilla situation develops, become actualized in the act of building the project. Guerilla improvements develop new informal networks of communication and cooperation which can both augment and get around the slower-moving official bureaucracy and push the bureaucracy to react. So the successful improvements are likely to attain a momentum and organic life of their own that goes beyond the individuals who push the improvements at various stages.

To play the guerilla improvements game, the improvers must know clearly what they want, so when an opportunity presents itself, they can act quickly. Petty political controversies can be overcome when the improvements fit in with generally held ideas. In the case of the sculpture park and Fourth Avenue street improvements, the Downtown Plan had already been adopted by city council. It called for strengthening the pedestrian link between central downtown and the Farmers' Market area. That general political acceptance of the project's end goal greased the way for De Brooke's eleventh-hour modifications as it passed through the city bureaucracy.

Guerrilla improvers have a chance to affect their environment directly and implement their own ideas. The physical part of working on a project can be rewarding, too. Personal contributions of muscle and sweat remain vivid when checkbook donations have been forgotten. It's a thrill to walk down the street five years later and be able to say "I cleaned those bricks" or "I planted that tree."

Of course, to make guerrilla improvements succeed, you also need energy and patience and some sophistication in dealing with people. For the past few weeks Bill De Brooke has had to be willing to drop whatever he's been doing to pursue the next step in his complicated dealings. Mike and Leslie Morris's group maintained the park for five years before the city agreed to buy it.

Nobody said guerrilla improvements are easy. Without checks and balances, they can easily become slap-dash and irrelevant. But at their best they have a sensible spontanaiety and sense of appropriateness that grand gesture projects often lose in the transformation from visionary presentation drawings to construction in the real world. ●

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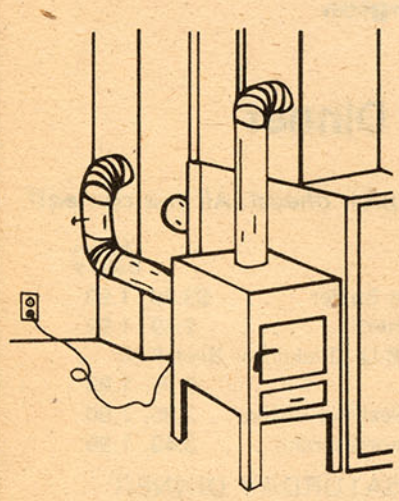

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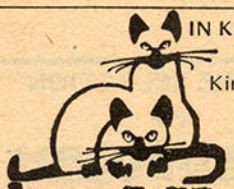

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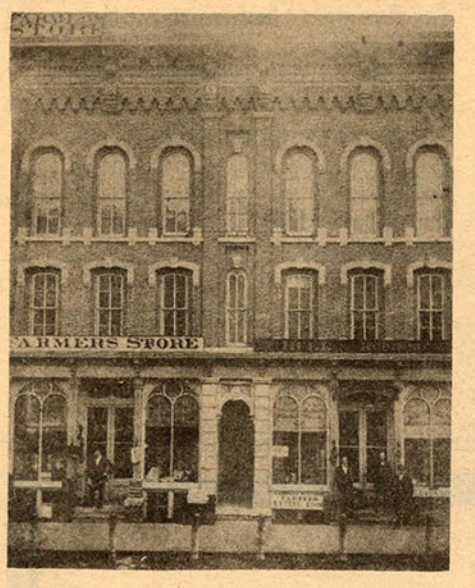
Test Of the Town

By BOB BRECK



The building appearing in this month's Test of the Town photo still stands in downtown Ann Arbor, though the ground floor facade has been greatly altered. You can win a record album of your choice from the Liberty Music Shop, 417 East Liberty, if your answer correctly identifying the location of the photo is one of the first two correct responses we receive in the mail. Send replies to the *Ann Arbor Observer*, 502 East Huron, Ann Arbor, 48104. No hand deliveries or special deliveries, please.

Last month's Test of the Town: 321 E. Ingalls.

Pat Clisham, Jr. and Joe Tiboni won records last month by identifying the metal flag and turret at 321 N. Ingalls, across from the old St. Joseph Hospital. Reuben Kempf, Sr., a prominent Ann Arbor banker, erected the house in the 1880's; today it's the office of Dr. George W. Hagerman and Ann Arbor's nicest remaining example of Queen Anne architecture in brick, with large stained-glass windows and decorative tile insets characteristic of that style.

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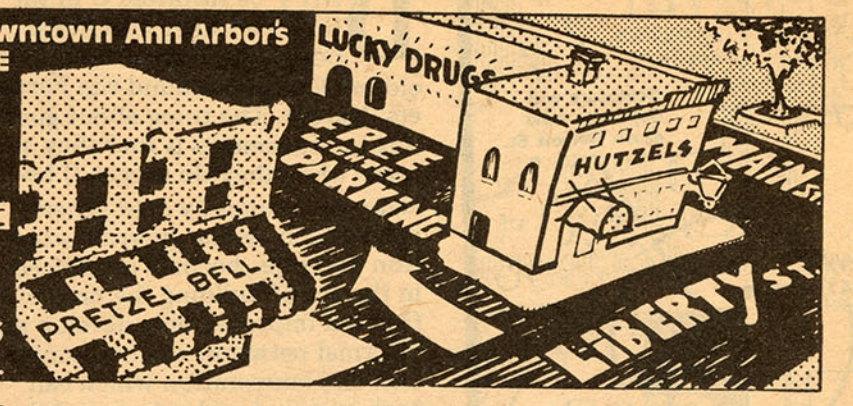

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LEISURE NOTES

Michigan Theater, 1928.

Vaudeville Returns to the Michigan

New York City's Palace Theater was the royal home of vaudeville during its golden days. Those times will be relived in Ann Arbor on the stage of the Michigan Theater this October 7, 8 and 9 when "St. Joe's Plays the Palace." Shades of George Burns and Gracie Allen, Jimmy Durante and Eddie Cantor will be on stage to raise money for the equipment fund of the new St. Joseph Mercy Hospital. Friday, October 7 is the gala premiere, with tickets starting at $25, but Saturday and Sunday tickets are available for $5 and $3.

Typical of the early days of vaudeville, there will be great variety in the entertainment—soft shoe dancing, tap, ballet and jazz. John McCollum will sing Jimmy Durante's famous "Inka-Dinka-Doo"; a medley of Sophie Tucker songs will be sung by Judy Manos; Willis Patterson will present material from Eddie Cantor's performances and, along with Irene Connors, will do a famous "Burns and Allen" routine.

The Michigan Theater is a most appropriate setting, having been briefly the scene for vaudeville-type performances just after its completion in 1927. With its lavish decorations and the lush sounds of its restored Barton Theater Organ, it's a picture palace in the grand tradition.

Saturday's performance is at 8:30 p.m.; Sunday shows are at 2 and 7 p.m. Tickets ($5 and $3) are available at the Michigan Theater box office weekdays from 10 to 5; for phone reservations, call 665-8221 or 761-2247.

Aging and the Art of Living

Two noteworthy exhibits help celebrate the U-M Institute of Gerontology's "Aging and the Art of Living" week this October. "The Photography of Imogen Cunningham" will be shown at the Union Art Gallery, first floor, Michigan Union, until October 28. Cunningham remained professionally active until her death at the age of 94, in 1975. The exhibit consists of work done in the last three years of her life; it includes photographs conveying the dignity and significance of old age. Some of the photographs are for sale.

"Images of Old Age in America," at the Rackham Gallery through October 21, uses photographs, drawings, and literary and historical texts to examine the popular images of aging in different periods of American history, compared and contrasted with the realities of existence for the elderly. The exhibit, prepared by historian Andrew Achenbaum and librarian Peggy Ann Kusnerz, is intended to sensitize viewers to issues related to aging. In pre-Civil War America, it points out, older people were venerated for their wisdom and experience, whereas later Americans have tended to devalue the worth of older people. Recently, however, it seems we've been obsessed with youth so long that a reaction has set in. Stereotypes are being shattered, and our conception of the value of older people and their contributions is becoming more positive.

Hours of the Rackham Gallery, on the third floor of the Rackham Building, are from 9 to 5, Monday through Friday, 1-5 Saturday. After Ann Arbor, the exhibit will be part of the Smithsonian Institution's Traveling Exhibit Service.

The special week dedicated to "celebrating the creative potential of older persons" is from October 10 through 15. It includes a symposium (Oct. 10 and 11) of scholarly and scientific reports on the effect of aging on the biology of the senses. A conference, from Oct. 12-15, deals with the humanities as lifelong sources of personal enrichment. Representatives from pioneering projects in continuing education for older persons will talk about their programs, research on adult learning potential will be discussed, and lectures will be given on three artists who remained prolific in later life (Goethe, Imogen Cunningham, and Carl Sandburg). Retired persons may attend the symposium or conference for only $5; the fee for others is $50 or $35, with a student discount. For further information, call the Institute of Gerontology, 764-3493.

Photo by Mel Ivory *Bus Depot on W. Huron, 1941.*

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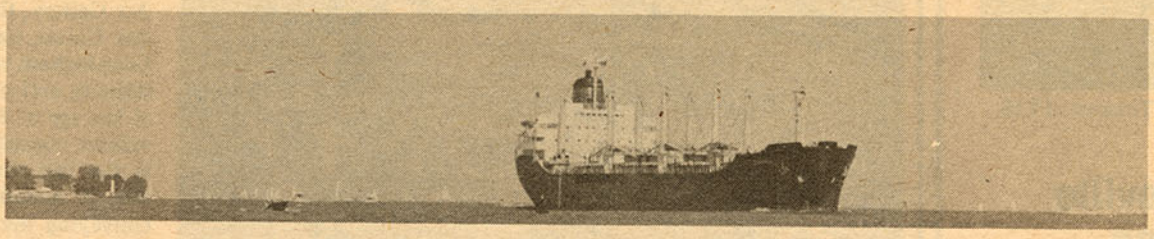


Belle Isle Is Again Worth a Trip

Detroit's Belle Isle is just the place to spend a sunny October day and soak in the last sunshine of summer. Ever since it was developed in the 1880's, the three-mile-long island has had spectacular natural advantages: sparkling water, green lawns and trees, and remarkable views of the Detroit skyline to the north and the Great Lakes freighter traffic on the Detroit River to the south.

Frederick Law Olmstead, planner of Central Park and America's first and foremost landscape architect, drew up the first park plan, of which only Central Avenue and a serpentine internal canal were actually constructed. Over the years lagoons were dug, marshes were filled in, and shorelines were extended to increase the island's size.

Generations of Detroiters nourish fond childhood memories of family outings to Belle Isle. With whimsical picnic pavillons, carnival attractions, band concerts and a carillon, the place always had a festive air. But in more recent years the 921-acre island park just 2½ miles from downtown Detroit fell upon hard times and neglect. Detroit city officials felt the hard-pressed city budget couldn't afford luxuries like maintaining parks. Mayor Coleman Young, however, considered the park to be of great symbolic importance to Detroiters as a favorite place where everyone can go to have a good time. Under Parks Superintendent Leon Atchison, considered an outstanding administrator by even the toughest critics of Young's administration, millions of dollars have gone into Belle Isle's improvement and better maintenance.

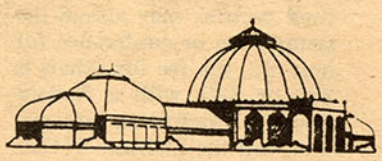
Belle Isle today is certainly as clean as Ann Arbor's parks, perhaps cleaner. Problems with youth gangs bothering other people have been solved, except for early-evening congregations of young motorcyclists on Central Avenue. The island is quite safe, according to police officers there, despite Detroit's reputation as Crime City.

So if you haven't been to Belle Isle for three or four years, you're in for a surprise. The Casino terrace and Scott Fountain plaza are completely renovated, more trees have been planted around the island, the restroom facilities are safe, and the Dossin Great Lakes Museum is open again.

The main point of local debate is not whether to spend money on Belle Isle but how to do it. The Friends of Belle Isle, a voluntary support organization, financed a $50,000 plan by well-known landscape architect and planner Dan Kiley to strengthen the wooded nature area, promote passive forms of recreation like walking and picnicing, and downplay the carnival attractions and concessions. Others would like to see more space devoted to athletics, an expanded zoo, and other active uses.

You can drive around Belle Isle in your car (the perimeter road is one-way starting to the right—east—as you get off the bridge), but bicycling is the most enjoyable way to get around the island. The terrain is flat, traffic is leisurely, and cyclists are common. If you can't take your own bicycle, rent one at the Riding Academy (see map).

In October the bathing beach, Children's Zoo, and canoe rental are already closed, but the cooler weather should be great for hiking and biking. You could drive into downtown Detroit via I-94, and 696 (The John Lodge), get off at the Jefferson exit. Head east on Jefferson to the Belle Isle bridge (the entrance drive is the first right past the Uniroyal plant) and explore Belle Isle.



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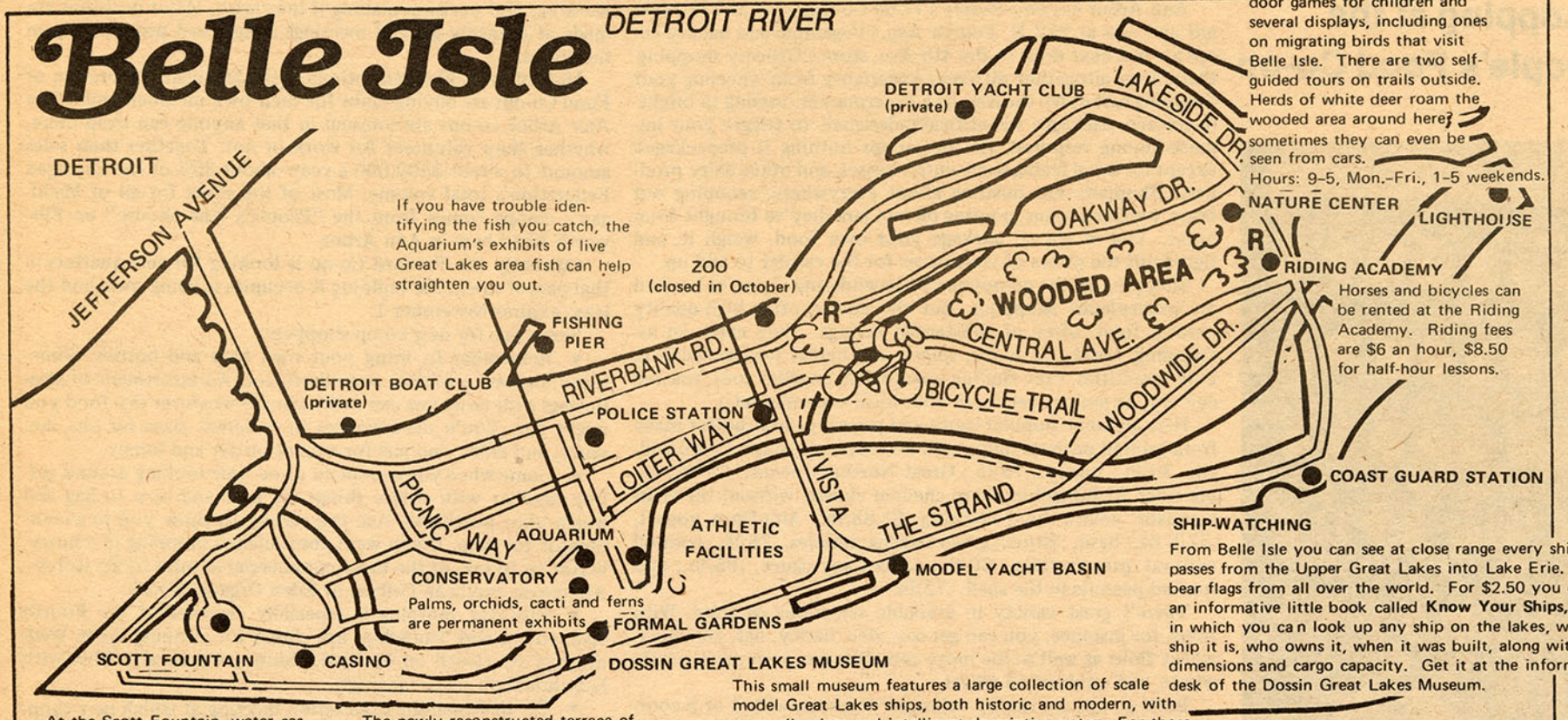
Belle Isle



If you have trouble identifying the fish you catch, the Aquarium's exhibits of live Great Lakes area fish can help straighten you out.

The Nature Center has indoor games for children and several displays, including ones on migrating birds that visit Belle Isle. There are two self-guided tours on trails outside. Herds of white deer roam the wooded area around here; sometimes they can even be seen from cars. Hours: 9–5, Mon.–Fri., 1–5 weekends.

Horses and bicycles can be rented at the Riding Academy. Riding fees are $6 an hour, $8.50 for half-hour lessons.

SHIP-WATCHING

From Belle Isle you can see at close range every ship that passes from the Upper Great Lakes into Lake Erie. They bear flags from all over the world. For $2.50 you can buy an informative little book called **Know Your Ships,** in which you can look up any ship on the lakes, what type ship it is, who owns it, when it was built, along with its dimensions and cargo capacity. Get it at the information desk of the Dossin Great Lakes Museum.

At the Scott Fountain, water cascades down terraces, with additional jets spurting from the mouths of turtles, dolphins, and lionesses. A A big gronze figure of Detroit real estate man James Scott overlooks the splendid fountain he donated to the city.

The newly reconstructed terrace of the Casino (erected in 1908) makes a good place to enjoy a bite from the snackbar inside and take in the view of the shipping channel and Windsor's north shore.

CONSERVATORY
Palms, orchids, cacti and ferns are permanent exhibits.

DOSSIN GREAT LAKES MUSEUM

This small museum features a large collection of scale model Great Lakes ships, both historic and modern, with unusually clear and intelligent descriptive notes. For those with less naval interests, the museum's show-stealer is the vast and richly-decorated smoking lounge of the luxury steamship **City of Detroit** (built in 1912), with much stained glass and elaborate carved trim. There's also a periscope for viewing ships on the Detroit River just outside. Museum hours: 10–5:30, Wed.–Sun.

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'77
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NATIONAL JOGGING DAY ENDURANCE CHALLENGE
10, 5, 3 MILE WALK–JOG–RUN–RACE
I do it because it's simple and spartan and for a rare moment I can be quiet, without a thousand thoughts in my head. I lose the eternal clatter.
I do it to get my heart beating, to sweat and feel my body burn calories and "ugly fat."
I do it as adventure and challenge; as politics against fumes and noise and crowds.
I do it for joy and play.
I do it because it's something I can do. Without it I would be less. Without it I don't feel as well. I don't look as well.
Without it, I wouldn't be me.
Rory Donaldson

Joggers . . . Walkers . . . Runners
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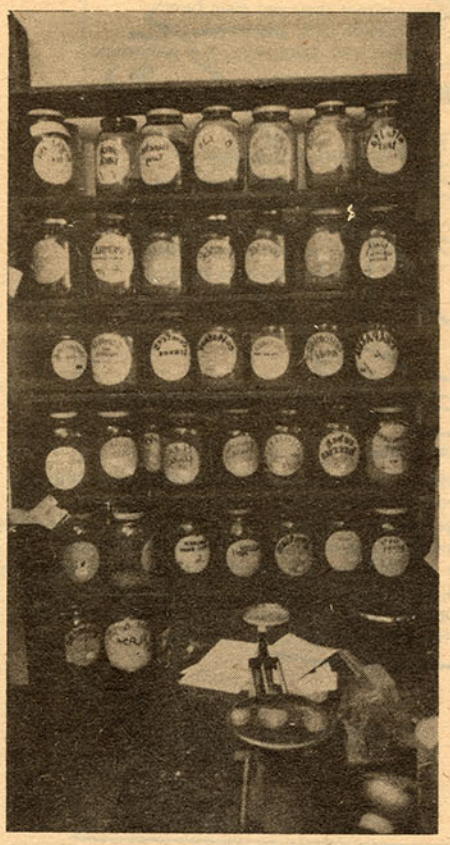
THE ANN ARBOR TRACK CLUB IS CELEBRATING
ANN ARBOR'S OFFICIAL
JOGGING DAY
October 9
2:00 P.M.
at Huron High School
More information available at any Ann Arbor sporting goods store.

Shopping at the People's Food Co-op



The herb and spice room stocks seldom-found items.

Ann Arbor has two People's Food Co-Ops, one at 722 Packard and one at 212 N. Fourth Ave. (Vegetable and bakery co-ops are just next door to the 4th Ave. store.) Grocery shopping there is an altogether different experience from wheeling your shopping cart down the aisle of a supermarket, tossing in brightly-colored packages scientifically-designed to trigger your impulse-buying response. At the co-ops nothing is prepackaged except for dried fruits, some nuts, cheeses, and other dairy products. Shoppers are bustling about everywhere, scooping out flour, weighing beans, pouring oil into jars they've brought from home. You've got to package your own food, weigh it, and figure out the prices of your items for the cashier to add up.

Shopping at the co-ops can be bewildering if you're hooked on convenience shopping. But the co-ops offer high-quality natural food, often at substantial savings. They carry an astounding variety of herbs, spices, and herbal teas available in bulk quantities. (Try finding sarsaparilla, angelica root, roasted chicory, or juniper berries in your local supermarket.)

Here are some popular items and prices: peanut butter made from ground peanuts only, with no extra salt, sugar, or oil added, .70/lb.; honey, .75/lb.; Great Northern beans, .38/lb.; apple cider, $1.63/gallon; sharp cheddar cheese, without the characteristic yellow food coloring, $1.88/lb.; Alta-Dena yogurt, .57/8 oz.; basil, .20/oz.; green lasagna noodles, .78/lb.; corn oil without preservatives, .60/lb.; tamari soy sauce, .95/lb.; and roasted peanuts in the shell, .72/lb.

There's great variety in available selections of food. With flour, for instance, you can get soy, rice, barley, oat, and buckwheat flour as well as the more common rye, corn meal, whole wheat, and unbleached wheat.

Both co-ops are run by volunteer workers, with 4 or 5 coordinators at each store. Many shoppers work one or two hours a week and earn a 17.7% discount. For most of them co-ops mean more than just a good deal on quality food. They like the cooperative spirit of working together in this not-for-profit "people's store," one of the most successful remnants of the student political activism of the early 1970's. People aren't oblivious to each other, as they tend to be in supermarkets, because they're participating in a group venture that involves them in shopping, working, and decision-making if they wish. Major decisions are made at monthly general meetings announced prominently in the stores.

Most of the 100 organizations in the Michigan Federation of Food Co-ops are buying clubs for their own members only. The Ann Arbor co-ops are unusual in that anyone can shop there, whether they volunteer for work or not. Together their sales amount to about $500,000 a year—about 30% of the Michigan Federation's total volume. Most of the stock for all of Michigan's co-ops comes from the "People's Wherehouse" on Ellsworth Road here in Ann Arbor.

Currently the Packard Co-op is looking for new quarters in that part of town; the building it occupies is being sold, and the lease expires November 1.

Some tips for new co-op shoppers:

- Remember to bring your own bags and bottles. Sometimes bags are available, sometimes not. An assortment of plastic bags with twist ties can easily handle whatever dry food you might get. You'll need bottles in different sizes for oils, soy sauce, and cider, and jars for peanut butter and honey.
- Come when you can spend some time looking around getting familiar with where things are kept and how to bag and weigh your purchases. Ask the cashier to show you to a coordinator for help. If you want convenience shopping in a hurry, better go to one of the three commercial natural foods stores—Applerose, Soybean Cellars, or Eden Organic Foods.
- Saturday morning is especially crowded at the Fourth Ave. co-op, and Thursdays are closed for cleaning there. Wednesdays are closed on Packard. Hours are generally 10-6, with later hours on some evenings.
- Try to attend the orientation meeting at which new shoppers can be introduced to the stores and shop in the evening. Time: Monday evenings at 7:30 at 212 N. Fourth Ave.
- Bear in mind that the foods are not preserved. Refrigerate corn meal, wheat germ, and, if they've been around more than a month, oils. Mold can be removed from maple sugar and Tamari soy sauce. Store flour and grains in glass jars or airtight plastic containers.

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